

Interagency Veterans Council

GO Employment Pod Meeting Minutes

February 1, 2012

9:00 – 11:00 pm

California Research Bureau
900 N Street, Room 340, Sacramento

I. Introductions

II. Approval of January 19 interim meeting minutes

III. Interagency Veterans Council (Employment Pod)

Purpose of Meeting – To brief members of goals of the workgroup; discuss progress on documenting the current services, funding, and data available for identifying and improving veteran employment outcomes; prepare for February 22/23 meeting with NGO's.

II. Open Issues

Staffing – Dennis Petrie announced that he was still trying to work out the logistics with CalVet on the transfer of 3 of his staff on a loan/borrow basis to work on the council. Pamela Rasada stated that it would be great to have staff in place by mid-February to help with planning the February 22/23 meeting.

Goals of workgroup – Pamela explained that the group will have a limited amount of time on February 22/23 to discuss strategies so it makes more sense to document the basic services, funding, and data currently available (environmental scan), rather than spinning our wheels going to the nth degree with details. After the meeting, the intention is the pods will continue to meet and then it might be more appropriate to go into more detail then. At the February meeting, we need to decide on voting structure of the pods, determine priorities, communicate with other pods, and figure out how to keep this process going. She stressed finding the low hanging fruit. Dennis asked whether the end goal of this council was to create a strategic plan. Pamela explained that plenary sessions will be informational and between those we will create "puzzle groups" to work with other pods on creating strategies for moving forward. Pamela expressed that the council members have the experience on advisory groups to create their own valuable path to making positive change, rather than being locked in to a certain process.

Discuss matrices - Identifying services offered, funding available, and data collected by government organizations to improve veteran employment outcomes in California.

- Dennis reiterated that more attention needs to be placed on "funding limitations". Jason pointed out that there is a column in the funding table titled "Funding Limitations". Eric proposed calling it "Funding Parameters". Pamela praised the effort to collect this information. Dennis proposed "Barriers to Effective Integration or Coordination" and emphasized that this could apply to all categories, not just funding.

Eric said there needs to be a subheading of "Legislative vs. Regulatory". Pamela recommended including whether funding is earmarked or block funded.

- Dennis reiterated that the first column of the table should be "Veteran Needs". Jason explained that he chose not to incorporate the "needs" into the matrices because he thought it would be overwhelming and create an unusable table. The group persisted that it would be valuable to map the needs to each of the areas (services, funding, and data). Jason expressed concern that without condensing the list of needs to a small number, the matrix will be very complicated, redundant, and lengthy. Jeff agreed that the needs should be combined at a macro level. Dennis warned that we cannot get rid of anything because one person's interpretation/categorization could sacrifice important information for another. He suggested our work product should be a universal template that other workgroups can use. That could be our low-hanging fruit for the February meeting and the work to begin completing the table in earnest begins after the meeting. Dennis noted that on paper this would be overwhelming but electronically would be valuable. Jason proposed creating a pivot table and the group concurred that would be useful.

III. New Business

Portals, integration of resources

- Dennis voiced a concern that website portals were being created by multiple organizations in multiple locations. Eric agreed this causes confusion and wastes funds and we should all sit down together and create one website that incorporates everyone – a true one stop website. Pamela shared her frustration with multiple portals. She mentioned a group called Likeminded that was working on a portal unification that linked all existing portals, rather than create a new super portal. Dennis suggested compiling a list of portals to document this uncoordination and waste. Nancy informed the workgroup that there were rumors of a big federal portal in the works. This prompted Dennis to ask if Secretary Gravett had reached out to federal representatives to participate in the council. Eric said he would follow up to see what he could do. Pamela suggested that as the feds see the progress of this council, they will want to be involved.
- Ron Jimenez informed the group that he recently attended a Napa/Solano veteran meeting and they discussed not duplicating efforts and creating a web-based service connection portal that links information. He also discussed the Vocation for Vets model created by LMID to help veterans decide what careers they might be best suited for based on their military experience. Eric questioned the value of this model and Jason agreed, stating that it was good in theory but employment data is needed to assess successful and unsuccessful career patterns of veterans. Ron mentioned Occupational Employment Statistical Survey administered by LMID for BLS does not capture information on veterans. Dennis stated this problem goes back to his opinion that programs are limited in what they can do based on funding, legislation, etc., but that we should pursue these changes nonetheless.
- Eric expressed frustration that too many new programs and portals are being implemented, and people keep re-creating the wheel, rather than using existing resources. Eric expressed concern that we do not know who knows about veterans in government organizations. He asked how we know who to include in these discussions from various agencies, as people can be working on veteran issues and the council may not even be aware of it.

Funding

- Dennis mentioned the problem with pursuing other funding opportunities are limited by how the funds can be used. Veterans are not the only clients served by most agencies. They are part of the universal audience. Therefore, funds generally are not available to only serve veterans. He also expressed frustration that some departments do not place the same priority on veterans and take advantage of grants that could be used to meet veteran needs. He gave a "pep talk" that we need to start doing more for veterans on our own, or the legislature is going to require individual departments to appropriate a certain percentage of their budget toward veterans.
- Jeff Riel mentioned that with his agency, the problem is not so much funding but getting veterans enrolled in their programs to take advantage of the services they offer. Eric offered solutions like getting their information to Walter Reed Medical Center or Stanford to let injured veterans know about rehabilitative services. He also suggested that this is the purpose of the council – to communicate and coordinate. Jeff reiterated that his point was that we have 90% of the resources we need and we don't necessarily need to pursue more funding. He mentioned there is much focus on veterans right now and he would love to have more success stories to showcase to the nation, such as quadrupling their veteran caseload. Jeff noted that programs will come as caseloads are increased and without building caseloads, we cannot use existing funding for programs.

IV. Action Items

- Jason will work with the other pod facilitators to create a universal template to document veteran services, funding, and data. This template will also map veteran needs.
- Group members will send portal links to Jason to document the current lack of coordination in providing veteran employment services.
- Next meeting set for Wednesday, February 15, 2012 as a conference call at a time to be determined.

V. Roll Call

- Present:
 - Jason Van Court, CRB
 - Eric Worthen, CalVet
 - Dennis Petrie, EDD
 - Jerita Porter-Wallace, EDD
 - Douglas Sale, CWIB
 - Ron Jiminez, CalVet (phone)
 - Jeff Riel, DOR
 - Nancy Sanders, DOL
 - Brian McMahon, ETP
 - Anthony Zamarron, CalVet
- Absent:
 - Mark Lennon, CalVet
 - William Armstrong, DCA

VI. Caveats

- None

Minutes submitted by: Jason Van Court

Minutes approved by Employment Pod on: